

News Release

Regional Director Deb Zak honored by U of M Extension with the Distinguished Outstanding Leadership Award

*By Itollefts on Friday, October 19, 2012*University of Minnesota Extension Dean Bev Durgan honored Dan Dolan, president of the Washington County Agricultural Society, on Oct. 9 at Extension's annual conference. She also honored several Extension faculty members for exemplary work that helped Minnesotans improve their lives through Extension research and education. The following is a list of recipients and awards:

Deb Zak, Regional Director, Distinguished Outstanding Leadership

Deb Zak (left), regional director in Northwest Minnesota, began her career as a county Extension educator in Pennington County before moving into regional leadership positions. Some of her administrative accomplishments include serving on the State Coordinating Committee for the Regional Sustainable Development Partnership; completing a nine-year term on the State Tourism Advisory Council; and serving on the University of Minnesota Crookston Executive Committee. Zak co-chairs the Extension American Indian Task Force, and works with University faculty and various tribal and community organizations to design and deliver a science and math summer program for students in grades 8-12 on the White Earth Reservation. The program improves students' academic achievement using a natural resources-based curriculum that incorporates Ojibwe culture and traditions.

Dan Dolan, Distinguished Friend of Extension

As a strong Washington County 4-H supporter and volunteer, Dolan led the core group of 4-H volunteers that advocated for restoring county funding for Extension programming. Today, as Washington County Extension Committee chairperson, Dolan continues to lead the effort to ensure county support and raise private funds that leverage county and state investments.

As president of the Washington County Agricultural Society, as well as horse program leader, Dolan ensures that the Washington County Fair provides a rich environment for 4-H'ers to demonstrate their learning and leadership.

Larry Jacobson, Extension engineer, Distinguished Campus-based Faculty

As an Extension agricultural engineer, Jacobson is a national expert in the area of agricultural housing, livestock air quality and odor abatement. Jacobson and colleagues developed a national air quality and odor control, monitoring and prediction model called OFFSET (Odor from Feedlots -Setback Estimation Tool). He was also a key member in developing the National Air Quality Assessment Tool used by Extension educators, farmers and government agency professionals across the U.S.

Suzanne Driessen, Extension Educator, Distinguished Field-based Faculty

Suzanne Driessen teaches foundational programs in food safety and food preservation while constantly working to identify and meet emerging food safety educational needs. Her teaching has reached consumers and food service staff across the state, resulting in behavior changes that protect the health of Minnesotans from foodborne illness. Driessen's work addresses many aspects of food safety in consumer, institutional and food service settings.

Private Applicator Recertification Team, Distinguished Team

The Pesticide Safety and Environmental Education - Private Applicator Recertification program team reaches farmers who have not historically been involved with Extension's Integrated Pest Management training. In partnership with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the team helps farmers learn to make better decisions about managing pesticides and pesticide-resistant insects, weeds and diseases. This program supports the need for up-to-date information that benefits the safety and security of their families, their communities and the environment.

U of M Team Members: Dean Herzfeld, Tana Haugen, Mary Kay Ferguson, Fritz Breitenbach, Lisa Behnken, Diane DeWitte, Michael Donnelly, Phil Glogoza, Dan Martens, Ryan Miller, Dave Nicolai, Brenda Postels, Liz Stahl, Jerry Tesmer, and Nathan Winter.

MDA Team Member: Kay Sargent

Community Mentorship Program Team, Distinguished Diversity and Inclusion

The Community Mentorship Program helps Minnesota's diverse and underserved populations "live a little better" through financial literacy education. This program is implemented through a unique partnership between Extension and Minnesota Council on Economic Education (MCEE), along with other University faculty members. A primary goal is to build the capacity of grassroots organizations to conduct their own culturally sensitive financial literacy training, especially in the language of the participants. The program has increased the capacity of participating agencies.

Team Members: Antonio Alba Meraz, Sara Croymans, Jennifer Garbow, Rosemary Heins, Lori Hendrickson, Rebecca Hagen Jokela, Cindy Petersen, Suzanne Sheridan, Patricia Olson, Claudia Parliament, and Jane Stockman



News Categories

Awards and Recognition

Extension

Tweet

News Home

News Archives



Small Campus. Big Degree..

- Employment

Events Calendar

Academic Calendar

Library

Directories

Maps, Directions & Parking

Quick Facts

Bookstore

- Faculty & Staff

Email & Calendar

Contact Webmaster

System Website

Home

2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716  
800-862-6466 | 218-281-6510 | [umcinfo@umn.edu](mailto:umcinfo@umn.edu)

© 2021 Regents of the University of Minnesota. All rights reserved.  
The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.  
[Privacy Statement](#)